

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-05 AID-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 A-01

OPR-02 OC-05 CCO-00 OMB-01 ACDA-05 TRSE-00 /083 W
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O 151310Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9806

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1440

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 4710

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, CB

SUBJECT: MARCH 15, THE 74TH DAY OF THE OFFENSIVE

REF: PHNOM PENH 4650

1. SUMMARY. FANK RETOOK TUOL LEAP NORTHWEST OF THE AIRPORT LATE TODAY. KHMER AIR FORCE SUPPORT PLAYED A KEY ROLE AND REPORTEDLY CAUSED HEAVY KC LOSSES. NEAK LUONG STAYED UNDER HEAVY ATTACK BY FIRE AND A RESUPPLY CONVOY LOST THREE KHMER NAVY SHIPS AFTER BECOMING ENSNARLED IN RIVER BARRICADES UNDER HEAVY SHORE FIRE. THE NUMBER OF ROCKETS DECLINED AT POCHENTONG DUE TO THE TUOL LEAP OPERATION: 10 ROUNDS LANDED WITHOUT EFFECT. THREE 105MM HOWITZER SHELLS CAME INTO THE AIRPORTAREA YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND 14 MORE JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT. NINE 107MM ROCKETS IN PHNOM PENH TODAY KILLED TWO PEOPLE AND WOUNDED 18. END SUMMARY.

2. IN A MASSIVE, COORDINATED DRIVE FANK TOOK TUOL LEAP NORTHWEST OF POCHENTONG AIRPORT LATE TODAY. KAF SUPPORT
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PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE AND THE AIR FORCE REPORTS MANY

KC KILLED BY AIR. THE OPERATION HAD KICKED OFF MARCH 13 AND HAS APPARENTLY GIVEN KC ARTILLERYMEN PAUSE AS SUGGESTED BY REDUCED FIGURES FOR INCOMING ROUNDS ON THE AIRPORT. FANK REPORTS PICKING UP 17 ROCKETS ON THE WAY INTO TUOL LEAP.

3. NEAK LUONG TOOK A HEAVY ATTACK BY FIRE AGAIN LAST NIGHT AS OVER 250 ROUNDS OF MIXED CALIBRE KILLED 33, INJURED 76 AND BURNED 126 HOUSES. IN ATTACKS IN THE NEAK LUONG/BANAM SECTOR, THE KC LOST 34 MEN. A NAVY CONVOY TO NEAK LUONG RAN INTO A BARRICADE AT THE DEI DOH CHOKEPOINT ON THE MEKONG AND TWO SHIPS ENSNARLED IN THE BARRICADE CAME UNDER FIRE, AND WERE BEACHED. ANOTHER VESSEL WHICH SUCCESSFULLY BROKE THE BARRICADE PERMITTING SUPPLY-LADEN SHIP TO CONTINUE RETURNED TO HELP OUT BUT KC SHOREGUNNERS SET IT AFIRE. NEAK LUONG-BASED ARTILLERY AND KAF WERE ORDERED TO DESTROY THE THREE VESSELS IN DAYLIGHT HOURS.

4. NORTH OF THE AIRPORT HEAVY KC ATTACKS THE NIGHT OF MARCH 14-15 AGAINST THE OPERATION TO CLEAR OUT A PRIMARY ROCKET-LAUNCHING AREA CAUSED A COMPANY TO WITHDRAW. THE ARMOR BRIGADE COMMANDER, WHO IS RUNNING THAT OPERATION, ORDERED AN UNUSUAL NIGHT ARMOR COUNTERATTACK IN CONJUNCTION WITH ARTILLERY AND MILICOPTERY JOS AT AIRPORT. THEY RETOOK THE POSITION AND HAVE INDICATIONS OF HEAVY LOSSES TO THE TWO KC ATTACKING BATTALIONS.

5. THE KC FIRED THREE 105MM HOWITZER ROUNDS IN THE AIRFIELD AREA YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND WAITED UNTIL JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT TO SHOOT ANOTHER 14 ROUNDS IN. NO 105'S LANDED IN DAYLIGHT HOURS TODAY BUT 10 ROCKETS EXPLODED ON THE AIRFIELD AND VICINITY. NINE OTHER ROCKETS HIT THE CAPITAL, MOST IN THE SOUTHEASTERN PART OF TOWN. THE ROUNDS KILLED TWO PEOPLE AND INJURED 18.
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